

INTO THE SHADOWS

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Quietly, but with forceful compassion, guardians go into "the shadows of life" to give attention and care to the "wards" of the Office of Public Guardian (OPG). One might ask "what is a "ward"?"



A ward might be a person with a life story they can or cannot tell. Perhaps one without others to care for them or is deemed unable to make basic life decisions: Where shall I live? What should I eat?

Mrs. H resides at a local facility and is a client of Cheryl Anderson, OPG. Mrs. H does not recognize Anderson when she visits as she is elderly and suffers from dementia. Even though Mrs. H can't speak, Anderson talks to her, sees that she is cared for appropriately and regularly works with the facility guaranteeing Mrs. H's needs are met.

Amy Christensen, also with OPG, respectfully helped plan funeral service for her long time client, Miss T. Christensen wrote the obituary, ordered flowers and made sure Miss T's favorite hymns were played at the service all to ensure Miss T's passing was given recognition.

While these are regular duties of a guardian, touching a person's hand, tucking in bed sheets or straightening pictures are the small acts of kindness that may not be seen, but are given freely by the guardian.

Each of us in DHS, are the "government" of whom Mr. Hubert Humphrey speaks. We all go into "the shadows" to take respect, service and compassion to those who have little light in their lives.

It was once said that the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped.

- Hubert H. Humphrey